

## ABSTRACT

At the time of preparing polyphenylene ether resin, there can be separated and recovered efficiently an aromatic  
5 compound solvent, amines making an azeotrope with water (hereafter, referred to as 'the amines' for short.) and methanol.

A method for producing polyphenylene ether, which comprises  
(a) a step for synthesizing polyphenylene ether by subjecting  
10 phenol to oxidative polymerization in the presence of a copper compound and amines in an aromatic compound solvent,  
(b) a step for precipitating polyphenylene ether particles by adding methanol into the solution of polyphenylene ether in the aromatic compound solvent obtained by the step (a),  
15 (c) a step for solid-liquid separating a slurry of polyphenylene ether obtained by the step (b), and then washing the separated polyphenylene ether particles with methanol to obtain the polyphenylene ether,  
(d) a step for adding water to a filtrate obtained by the  
20 step (c) to mix them, and then liquid-liquid separating the mixture into a phase consisting mainly of the aromatic compound and a phase consisting mainly of methanol and water, and  
(e) a step for supplying the phase consisting mainly of methanol and water, obtained at the step (d) to the middle portion  
25 of a distilled column to perform distillation, and separating out a distillate liquid consisting mainly of methanol, a bottom liquid consisting mainly of water and a side-cut liquid containing the amines by distillation, recycling the distillate liquid consisting mainly of methanol as methanol  
30 of the steps (b) and (c), and recycling the side-cut liquid as part of the filtrate of the step (d).